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# UN HUMAN SETTLEMENTS PROGRAMME BACKGROUND GUIDE 2015

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# NATIONAL MODEL UNITED NATIONS





# THE 2015 NATIONAL MODEL UNITED NATIONS

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Dear Delegates,

We are pleased to welcome you to the 2015 National Model United Nations Washington, D.C. Conference (NMUN•DC)! This year's United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) staff is: Director Dieyun Song and Assistant Director Eileen Austin. In May, Dieyun received her B.A. in Business Management and Economic Crime Prevention and Investigations from Lynchburg College, and she is continuing graduate studies there in History. She is thrilled to return for her second year on staff at NMUN•DC. Eileen graduated from the State University of New York at Oneonta in May 2014 with a B.A. in Political Science and a B.A. in International Studies. She currently works in accounts receivable for Cintas in Westchester, New York. She is excited for her first year on staff at NMUN•DC.

The topics under discussion for UN-Habitat are:

- I. Engaging Youth in Sustainable Urbanization Initiatives
- II. Addressing Long- and Short-Term Shelter Needs through Reconstruction Efforts
- III. Mitigating Climate Change by Utilizing Alternative Energy Resources

The United Nations Human Settlements Programme plays a vital role within the United Nations as the expert body in promoting and providing sustainable human settlements and urban planning for all. Issues such as sanitation, reconstruction, and the transformation of slums are all in the committee's concerns. To fulfill its mission, UN-Habitat initiates studies, conducts field works on the frontline, submits reports, and draft resolutions to the General Assembly through the Economic and Social Council. Your creative ideas and hard works can contribute to sustainable human settlement programs around the world for all. By preparing your position papers, negotiating and collaborating with your fellow delegates, and writing draft resolutions, you will not only be able to make your voice heard but also gain more insights in the work of UN-Habitat. We are excited to read your position papers and work with each of you during the Conference.

We hope you will find this Background Guide useful as it serves to introduce you to the topics for this committee; however, it is not meant to replace further research. We highly encourage you to explore your Member State's policies in full detail and use the Annotated Bibliography and Bibliography as part of your research to expand your knowledge on these topics and prepare to discuss solutions with fellow delegates. Prior to the conference, each delegation will submit a [position paper](#) based on their preparation (due 1 October). Please take note of the [NMUN policies](#) on the website and in the [Delegate Preparation Guide](#) regarding plagiarism, codes of conduct/dress code/sexual harassment, awards philosophy/evaluation method, etc. Adherence to these guidelines is mandatory.

The [NMUN Rules of Procedure](#) are available for download from the NMUN website. This document includes the long and short form of the rules, as well as an explanatory narrative and example script of the flow of procedure. It is thus an essential instrument in preparing for the conference and a reference during committee.

If you have any questions concerning your preparation for this committee or the Conference itself, you are welcome to contact Under-Secretaries-General Lauren Shaw ([usglauren.dc@nmun.org](mailto:usglauren.dc@nmun.org)) and Katrena Porter ([usgkat.dc@nmun.org](mailto:usgkat.dc@nmun.org)).

We wish you all the best during your preparation and look forward to seeing you at the Conference!

Sincerely,

Dieyun Song, *Director*  
Eileen Austin, *Assistant Director*

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## Committee Overview

### **Introduction**

United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) is the leading agency on all human settlement matters within the United Nations (UN) system.<sup>1</sup> Not only does UN-Habitat strive to provide a stable living condition to all persons who are in need, but it also strives to establish that settlement in a functioning and stable environment.<sup>2</sup> UN-Habitat is environmentally conscious and strives to leave the environment and economy in a better condition than it found it.<sup>3</sup> In order to better understand UN-Habitat's future goals, an in-depth look at the history and advancements of the committee is essential.

### **Committee History**

In 2002, the implementation of UN General Assembly resolution 56/206 revised the Commission on Human Settlements, founded in 1978, to form UN-Habitat.<sup>4</sup> This resolution merged the Commission on Human Settlements with the United Nations Habitat and Human Settlements Foundation (UNHHSF).<sup>5</sup> Marking a significant change from the previous model, UN-Habitat's financing and governing body are separate from that of the UN General Assembly.<sup>6</sup> Now classified as a complete program within the UN system, UN-Habitat works toward a reduction in poverty through sustainable development.<sup>7</sup> Aiming for collaboration between Member States to produce successful human settlements, UN-Habitat comports with the *Habitat Agenda*.<sup>8</sup> Developed out of the *Second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II)*, in Istanbul (1992), the *Habitat Agenda* reaffirms the pledge to improved quality of life through developed human settlements.<sup>9</sup> Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon reinforced the commitment of the UN, and UN-Habitat, to the continued support of the *Habitat Agenda* when he stated, "The world has changed dramatically since the second United Nations Conference on Human Settlements. More than ever before, we understand the power of well-planned urbanization for development."<sup>10</sup> The need to implement the *Habitat Agenda* in developing countries, and to better utilize financial resources, created the justification for establishing UN-Habitat.<sup>11</sup> Advanced urbanization in developing countries prevents adequate development of human settlements.<sup>12</sup> A continued influx of people quickly outgrows the assistance provided, therefore posing a challenge to the committee.<sup>13</sup> Additionally, UN-Habitat relies on the assistance of the governments of Member States to create an environment for sustainable development that encourages investment into future projects.<sup>14</sup>

### **Mandate**

UN-Habitat is the center of all matters regarding urbanization and human settlements within the UN system.<sup>15</sup> While partnering with other UN agencies, UN-Habitat strives to develop towns and cities that are both environmentally and socially sustainable.<sup>16</sup> It is the responsibility of UN-Habitat to continuously review the activities carried out and evaluate the success of established settlements.<sup>17</sup> The *Habitat Agenda* explicitly states the functions, goals, and the

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<sup>1</sup> UN-Habitat, *UN-Habitat at a glance*.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> UNGA, *Strengthening the mandate and status of the Commission on Human Settlements and the status, role, and functions of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) (A/RES/56/206)*, 2002.

<sup>5</sup> UN-Habitat, *History, mandate & role in the UN system*.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> UN-Habitat, *UN-Habitat for a Better Urban Future*.

<sup>8</sup> UN-Habitat, *The Habitat Agenda*, 1996.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> UN-Habitat, *We committed ourselves to implement the Habitat Agenda – Ban Ki-moon*, 2014.

<sup>11</sup> UNGA, *Strengthening the mandate and status of the Commission on Human Settlements and the status, role, and functions of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) (A/RES/56/206)*, 2002.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> UNGA, *Institutional arrangements for international co-operation in the field of human settlements (A/RES/32/162)*, 1977.

<sup>16</sup> UN-Habitat, *History, mandate & role in the UN system*.

<sup>17</sup> UNGA, *Institutional arrangements for international co-operation in the field of human settlements (A/RES/32/162)*, 1977.

mandate of UN-Habitat.<sup>18</sup> Originally stated in the *Vancouver Declaration on Human Settlements* in 1976, the *Istanbul Declaration on Human Settlements* in 1996, and UN General Assembly resolution 32/162 of 19 December 1977, the mandate was further expanded in 2002 when the UNHHSF and the Commission on Human Settlements merged to become UN-Habitat.<sup>19</sup> General Assembly resolution 56/206 of 26 February 2002 gave UN-Habitat autonomy over its activities.<sup>20</sup>

The continued theme throughout all founding documents of UN-Habitat notes that the condition of human settlements correlates directly with the quality of human life of the persons that occupy them. It is the goal of UN-Habitat to focus on helping the most disadvantaged people.<sup>21</sup> UN-Habitat aims to create livable conditions and to ensure a functioning economy and sustainable environment.<sup>22</sup> Furthermore, UN-Habitat advances the *Millennium Development Goals*, specifically to eradicate extreme poverty, and will work toward achievement of the post-2015 development agenda.<sup>23</sup>

### ***Governance, Structure, and Membership***

UN-Habitat reports biennially to the GA through the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).<sup>24</sup> The three main bodies of the Governing Council (GC), the Secretariat, and the Committee of Permanent Representatives (CPR) are tasked with providing assistance to countries, promoting global cooperation, and providing access to necessary funds at the global and regional level.<sup>25</sup> It is also the responsibility of UN-Habitat to keep in close contact with the UN system, so as to further align the goals and objectives of all bodies in the field of human settlements.<sup>26</sup>

#### *The Governing Council*

The GC is composed of 58 Member States that are elected by the ECOSOC, and it is the authority on forming strategy and goals for UN-Habitat.<sup>27</sup> The GC reserves 16 seats for African states, 13 seats for Asian and Asian-Pacific states, 6 seats for Eastern European states, 10 seats for Latin American states, and 13 seats for Western European and other states; each Member State is elected to a four year term.<sup>28</sup> The body meets every two years to assess the progress on implemented programs and to pass a new budget.<sup>29</sup>

#### *The Secretariat*

The Secretariat is led by an Executive Director, who is also an Under-Secretary-General to the General Assembly.<sup>30</sup> Dr. Joan Clos, a native of Barcelona, Spain, was elected as the Executive Director in 2010.<sup>31</sup> The headquarters of the Secretariat is located in Nairobi, Kenya.<sup>32</sup> As the executive body, the Secretariat ensures that the decisions made by the governing body are enacted properly and successfully.<sup>33</sup> While overseeing urban initiatives and human settlements projects, the Secretariat is also responsible for implementing research projects and educating the public.<sup>34</sup> The Secretariat is made up of three main parts: offices, branches, and regional offices.<sup>35</sup> The offices are the management centers while each branch has its own specialization.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> UN-Habitat, *The Habitat Agenda*, 1996.

<sup>19</sup> UN-Habitat, *UN-Habitat for a Better Urban Future*.

<sup>20</sup> UNGA, *Strengthening the mandate and status of the Commission on Human Settlements and the status, role, and functions of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) (A/RES/56/206)*, 2002.

<sup>21</sup> United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, *The Vancouver Declaration on Human Settlements*, 1976.

<sup>22</sup> United Nations Conference on Human Settlements, *The Istanbul Declaration on Human Settlements*, 1996.

<sup>23</sup> UNGA, *United Nations Millennium Declaration (A/RES/55/2)*, 2000.

<sup>24</sup> UNGA, *Strengthening the mandate and status of the Commission on Human Settlements and the status, role, and functions of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) (A/RES/56/206)*, 2002.

<sup>25</sup> UNGA, *Institutional arrangements for international co-operation in the field of human settlements (A/RES/32/162)*, 1977.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> UN-Habitat, *Our structure: overview*.

<sup>28</sup> UN-Habitat, *Governing council*.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> UN-Habitat, *Our executive director*.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> UN-Habitat, *Our secretariat*.

<sup>33</sup> UN-Habitat, *Our structure: overview*.

<sup>34</sup> UN-Habitat, *Our secretariat*.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

### *Committee of Permanent Representatives*

The CPR acts as the intermediary, serving as the permanent representation of the GC at the Secretariat in Nairobi.<sup>37</sup> The members of the CPR are ambassadors appointed to work with UN-Habitat from Member States of the committee.<sup>38</sup> The CPR meets four times a year to implement decisions and projects that appear in between sessions of the GC.<sup>39</sup> In addition, the CPR reviews the progress of the GC by preparing draft solutions and suggestions to be presented to the Secretariat.<sup>40</sup>

### ***Functions and Powers***

First and foremost, UN-Habitat aims to enact policy objectives, so as to not only set up successful human settlements programs but to also create an implementation system in which future successful settlements can be built at a local or regional level.<sup>41</sup> UN-Habitat is held accountable for its budget and resources, as well as guiding and supervising all projects and programs within the scope of the committee.<sup>42</sup>

### *Finance*

Based on 2012 statistics, the GA allocates \$10.7 million as a contribution to UN-Habitat's budget.<sup>43</sup> UN-Habitat is also the recipient of contributions from Member States' governments at an estimated \$10.9 million annually.<sup>44</sup> Additionally, UN-Habitat receives donations from the private sector that are contingent on specific uses.<sup>45</sup> These donations are allocated to UNHHSF (\$36.2 million) and technical work at the country-level (\$128.5 million).<sup>46</sup> While the UNHHSF finances the implementation of human settlements in struggling areas, it then becomes the responsibility of the governments to maintain the settlements with their own resources and funds.<sup>47</sup> UN-Habitat also relies on the intermittent support of the World Bank Group and other regional banks.<sup>48</sup>

### ***Recent Sessions***

The most recent session of the UN-Habitat GC was held at the committee's headquarters in Nairobi, Kenya, in April 2015.<sup>49</sup> The theme of the session was the role of UN-Habitat in promoting sustainable urban development in the post-2015 development agenda.<sup>50</sup> At the session, the GC passed resolution 25/2, which called for the Executive Director to continue to support local governments in their efforts to implement UN-Habitat programs.<sup>51</sup> The session also passed a new budget which allocated \$45,617,500 for general purposes and \$101,297,500 for special purposes.<sup>52</sup> Bearing in mind the reality of the financial requirements of the committee, the GC requested the Executive Director practice greater oversight of the budgeted uses.<sup>53</sup> The GC also introduced the strategic plan for 2014-2019.<sup>54</sup> Recognizing the efforts made on a regular basis by local governments, the strategic plan requests that the Executive Director continue to support those governments with educational programs aimed toward building human settlements.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> UN-Habitat, *Our structure: overview*.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> UN-Habitat, *Committee of permanent representatives*.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> UNGA, *Institutional arrangements for international co-operation in the field of human settlements (A/RES/32/162)*, 1977.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>43</sup> UN-Habitat, *Our donors*.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>47</sup> UNGA, *Strengthening the mandate and status of the Commission on Human Settlements and the status, role, and functions of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) (A/RES/56/206)*, 2002.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> UN-Habitat, *Urban solutions*.

<sup>50</sup> UN-Habitat, *25<sup>th</sup> session of the governing council*.

<sup>51</sup> UN-Habitat, *Strengthening national ownership and operational capacity (HSP/GC/25/L.8)*, 2015.

<sup>52</sup> UN-Habitat, *Strategic plan for 2014-2019 and the work programme and budget of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme for the biennium 2016-2017 (HSP/GC/25/L.2)*, 2015.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>54</sup> UN-Habitat, *Implementation of the strategic plan for 2014-2019 (HSP/GC/25/L.6)*, 2015.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*

In March 2015 UN-Habitat hosted the Seventh Session of the World Urban Forum, in Medellín, Colombia, wherein the impacts of climate change on the implementation of human settlements was a major topic of discussion.<sup>56</sup> In May 2015 UN-Habitat collaborated with the International Ecological Safety Collaborative Organization in Milan, Italy, to reaffirm youth awareness of the importance of ecological safety in the planning of urban settlements.<sup>57</sup> Also in May 2015, UN-Habitat partnered with the Japanese government to provide shelter and reconstruction assistance in Nepal in anticipation of a monsoon in the wake of the earthquake that devastated the area.<sup>58</sup> In October 2016 UN-Habitat will host the UN Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development (Habitat III) in Quito, Ecuador.<sup>59</sup> The conference will focus on rethinking the urban agenda, as well as passing a new document, the *New Urban Agenda*.<sup>60</sup>

### **Conclusion**

It is evident that when granted access to the proper funds, UN-Habitat is able to achieve significant advancements in the field of human settlements. It is important for delegates to explore the results of the 25<sup>th</sup> session in order to comprehend the current priorities of UN-Habitat. In addition, further research into budget allocations will give delegates a clearer picture of the threshold of abilities and functions of the committee.

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<http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/docs/2003/resolution%202003-62.pdf>

*As a document that was passed by the body that oversees UN-Habitat, this resolution provides great insight into how other committees prioritize UN-Habitat. The document provides information about how UN-Habitat is financed. Additionally, the document calls for local governments to support UN-Habitat efforts, and encourages that support through suggestions and assistance. The delegates will be able to begin their research into the UNHHSF with this resolution. Since further research into the financing options for UN-Habitat should be a priority for discussion, this will prove to be an important document.*

United Nations, General Assembly, Fifty-Sixth session. (2002). *Strengthening the mandate and status of the Commission on Human Settlements and the status, role, and functions of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) (A/RES/56/206)* [Resolution]. Retrieved 4 May 2015 from:  
<http://undocs.org/A/RES/56/206>

*As the founding document of UN-Habitat, this resolution is an optimal place for delegates to begin their research. It clearly defines not only the mandate, but also the structure and funding sources for the organization. Furthermore, it will provide the delegates with a basic understanding of the role of the organization. This document references other important documents, which will be beneficial to delegates while conducting their research.*

United Nations Human Settlements Programme. (n.d). *UN-Habitat for a better urban future* [Website]. Retrieved 4 May 2015 from: <http://unhabitat.org/>

*This website contains all of the important information regarding the programs and founding of UN-Habitat. It houses numerous links to different publications. It contains enough information for delegates to gain a basic understanding of the body. Additionally, delegates will be able to conduct further research through the information provided on the website.*

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<sup>56</sup> UN-Habitat, *Urban equity in development – cities for life*, 2015.

<sup>57</sup> UN-Habitat, *UN-Habitat and partner host 'dear students' event in Milan*, 2015.

<sup>58</sup> UN-Habitat, *Japan and UN-Habitat to provide shelter support in Nepal before and during monsoon*, 2015.

<sup>59</sup> UN-Habitat, *Habitat III*.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*



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## I. Engaging Youth in Sustainable Urbanization Initiatives

*“We need optimism. We need a vision. We need a strategy to overcome the problems of urbanization, because urbanization is a source of development.”<sup>61</sup>*

- How can UN-Habitat collaborate with Member States to strengthen and improve existing youth programs to increase youth participation in sustainable urbanization initiatives?
- What capacity-building programs can UN-Habitat provide to Member States and other actors to help governments tackle the current challenges and obstacles of urbanization? What can UN-Habitat do to further implement an urban sustainable development goal in the post-2015 development agenda?

### **Introduction**

Approximately 60% of the global population will live in urban areas by 2030, and 90% of this urbanization trend will take place in developing regions, including Asia, the Caribbean, Africa, and Latin America.<sup>62</sup> As cities are the center of political and social development for many countries, the trend of urbanization creates a challenging task and also a valuable opportunity for development, simultaneously. According to United Nations Conference on Trade

<sup>61</sup> Clos, *Opening Statement of the GC25*, 2015, p. 2.

<sup>62</sup> UN-Habitat, *UN-Habitat at a glance*.



and Development (UNCTAD), sustainable urbanization means to “address the needs of ... population, ensure the circulation of people through sound mobility systems and use...resource[s] efficiently, and even manage to build a circular economy through means such as recycling.”<sup>63</sup> This definition shows that sustainable urbanization does not only mean environmental sustainability but also a sustainable development strategy for the population, resources, and economy. The youth populations, which include people who are between the ages of 15 and 24, are vital players in the sustainable urbanization movement.<sup>64</sup> Young people have great potential, ideas, and innovation that can energize the world and brighten the future; therefore, empowering youth and engaging youth in sustainable urban development initiatives is crucial. However, challenges, including armed conflicts, health issues, climate change, poverty, limited access to education, and high unemployment rates, exist in every region and are preventing the full and effective participation of youth in sustainable urbanization initiatives.

### ***International and Regional Framework***

Articles 45 and 120 of UN-Habitat’s guiding document, the *Habitat Agenda*, both state the committee’s commitment in and the importance of engaging and empowering youth in sustainable human settlements initiatives.<sup>65</sup> The *Istanbul Declaration on Human Settlements* (2001) also emphasizes the importance of youth’s full and effective participation in sustainable development.<sup>66</sup> The eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were adopted to address global development challenges.<sup>67</sup> MDG 7, “ensure environmental sustainability,” includes a target to improve the lives of at least 100 million slum dwellers by 2020.<sup>68</sup> With the conclusion of the MDGs in 2015, efforts are underway to ensure that the post-2015 development agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) also recognize the vital role of sustainable urbanization.<sup>69</sup> Proposed SDG 11, to “make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable,” is directly aligned with UN-Habitat’s responsibilities and commitments.<sup>70</sup> Proposed Target 11.3 particularly addresses broader involvement in urbanization planning and management by setting 2030 as the target date for enhancing “inclusive and sustainable urbanization and capacities for participatory, integrated and sustainable human settlement planning and management in all countries.”<sup>71</sup> Furthermore, the seventh World Urban Forum, convened by UN-Habitat in Medellín, Colombia, from 5-11 April 2014, adopted the *Medellín Declaration* (2014), which advocates the promotion of youth engagement in sustainable urban planning initiatives in the post-2015 development agenda.<sup>72</sup>

### ***Role of the International System***

#### ***UN-Habitat***

UN-Habitat has always been a strong advocate of engaging youth in creating inclusive and sustainable human settlement programs.<sup>73</sup> Its resolution 20/1 of April 2005 urged Member States to increase youth and youth organizations’ participation in national delegations to the GC and the World Urban Forum (WUF).<sup>74</sup> GC Resolution 24/12 of 19 April 2013 on the topic of “Youth and sustainable urban development,” recognized the potential and position of youth, who contribute over half of the global population, in solving the critical issues in human settlements, especially in developing regions.<sup>75</sup> Aside from addressing the importance of youth engagement in urban development, UN-Habitat also encourages governments to take gender sensitivity and equality into consideration in all urban planning matters to ensure youth’s and women’s equal rights in society.<sup>76</sup> During the 25<sup>th</sup> session of the

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<sup>63</sup> UNCTAD, *Science, Technology and Innovation for Sustainable Urbanization*, 2014, p. 5.

<sup>64</sup> UNESCO, *What do we mean by “youth”?*.

<sup>65</sup> UN-Habitat, *The Habitat Agenda Goals and Principles, Commitments and the Global Plan of Action*, 2003, pp. 16, 52.

<sup>66</sup> Istanbul Declaration on Human Settlements, 2001, Art. 7.

<sup>67</sup> Millennium Project, *What they are*.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>69</sup> Osborn, Cutter, & Ullah, *Universal Sustainable Development Goals: Understanding the Transformational Challenge for Develop Countries* p. 17.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>72</sup> UN-Habitat, *7<sup>th</sup> World Urban Forum Medellín Declaration*.

<sup>73</sup> UN-Habitat, *Youth and human settlements (HSP/GC/20/1)*, 2005.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>75</sup> UN-Habitat, *Youth and human settlements (HSP/GC/24/12)*, 2013.

<sup>76</sup> UN-Habitat, *Promoting sustainable urban development by creating improved economic opportunities for all, with special reference to youth and gender (HSP/GC/24/11)*, 2013.

UN-Habitat GC in April 2015, sustainable urbanization was also one of the core items of the discussions.<sup>77</sup> Council resolution 25/L.6, titled “*Implementation of the strategic plan for 2014-2019*,” reaffirmed the importance of sustainable urbanization, and the capacity-building of and the cooperation with Member States and local governments.<sup>78</sup> GC resolution 25/L.9 further addresses the essential role sustainable urbanization plays in every Member State’s national sustainable development plan.<sup>79</sup>

UN-Habitat’s Urban Youth Research Network (UYRN), which is made up of youth experts in different social development fields from all over the world, provides research, data analysis, and strategy formulation assistance and service to Member States.<sup>80</sup> Through UYRN, UN-Habitat conducts research and hosts workshops to discuss the challenge and opportunities of urban youth populations and also assists Member States in forming sustainable strategies for youth employment and capacity building.<sup>81</sup> In addition, UN-Habitat’s Urban Youth Fund (UYF) and its capacity building, e-learning, and mentorship programs also empower youth and engage urban youth populations, especially those in developing countries, in sustainable urban development initiatives.<sup>82</sup> UYF operates in 63 countries and 172 cities; it has made significant progresses in areas including youth participation in decision-making, the economic empowerment of youth, social perception of youth, and gender equality.<sup>83</sup> Through the progress the youth leaders were able to make with assistance from the Fund, it is apparent that youth populations are an asset and resource in the advancement of sustainable urbanization.<sup>84</sup>

#### *Other UN Entities*

The UN General Assembly resolution 69/226 of 13 January 2015 highlights sustainable urbanization’s “transformative force” in achieving sustainable development and invites Member States to include youth in its urban planning.<sup>85</sup> ECOSOC also integrated the sustainable urbanization segment into its meeting in May 2014.<sup>86</sup> ECOSOC resolution 2014/30 also calls upon Member States to further implement sustainable urban development strategies and to create an inclusive community for all.<sup>87</sup> The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) also applies the theme of “Education for Sustainable Development” in all sectors to promote the importance of sustainable urban policies and enhance youth participation in urban settings.<sup>88</sup> Additionally, through the work on youth empowerment by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and its partners, youth participation in decision-making on both local and national government has been improved, and youth preparedness and capacity-building for civil engagement has been strengthened as well.<sup>89</sup>

#### *Civil Society Organizations*

As important operative partners of the entire UN system, civil society organizations (CSOs) contribute significant support and resources, including expertise, funding, and labor, to the implementation of youth engagement and sustainable urbanization.<sup>90</sup> For instance, Harikar NGO is an Iraq-based CSO that is devoted to human rights fulfillment and improving equality among different groups.<sup>91</sup> To increase young people’s civic engagement, Harikar NGO holds seminars, conducts debates between youth and local politicians, and implements other campaigns that promote youth political engagement.<sup>92</sup> Over 1,000 participants attend Harikar NGO’s events every year and its seminars and workshops not only empower youth by providing knowledge but also educate the public on the

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<sup>77</sup> UN-Habitat, *Urban Solutions*.

<sup>78</sup> UN-Habitat, *Draft resolution 25/4: Implementation of the strategic plan for 2014-2019 (HSP/GC/25/L.6)*, 2015.

<sup>79</sup> UN-Habitat, *Contribution of the United Nations Settlements Programme to the post-2015 development agenda in order to promote sustainable urban development and human settlements (HSP/GC/25/L.9)*, 2015.

<sup>80</sup> UN-Habitat, *Youth*.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>82</sup> UN-Habitat, *Urban Youth Fund*.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>84</sup> UN-Habitat, *Evaluation of the UN-Habitat Youth Programme & Urban Youth Fund*, 2011, p. 3.

<sup>85</sup> UNGA, *Implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and strengthening of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) (A/RES/69/226)*, 2015.

<sup>86</sup> ECOSOC, *2014/30. Human settlements (E/RES/2014/30)*, 2014.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>88</sup> UNESCO, *Sustainable Urbanization*.

<sup>89</sup> UNDP, *UNDP Youth Strategy 2014-2017: empowered youth, sustainable future*, pp. 29-30.

<sup>90</sup> UN-Habitat, *Our Partners*.

<sup>91</sup> Harikar NGO, *History of Harikar NGO*.

<sup>92</sup> Harikar NGO, *Promoting political participation of youth*.

important role of youth in social development.<sup>93</sup> Similarly, NGO IUVENTA, a volunteer-based CSO located in Serbia, also organizes youth forums and seminars to create more opportunities for youth to voice their ideas in society.<sup>94</sup> CSOs are the grass-root organizations that can directly engage youth in decision-makings, and their execution skill is a valuable asset to the implementation of UN-Habitat's and local authorities' policies.

### ***Sustainable Urbanization, SDGs, and the Post-2015 Development Agenda***

As the urban population continues to increase, efforts have been made to include an Urban Sustainable Development Goal (USDG) in the post-2015 development agenda because a global sustainable development cannot be achieved with the absence of sustainable urban development.<sup>95</sup> At the seventh session of the Open Working Group on SDGs in 2014, all Member States shared the goal of including a sustainable urbanization goal in the post-2015 development agenda.<sup>96</sup> Cities are critical for global development because of the innovative ideas, technological advancements, and social progress they contain.<sup>97</sup> Those efforts to include an USDG have identified six vital roles that should be implemented in the SDGs and the post-2015 development agenda.<sup>98</sup>

1. Raise awareness and provide knowledge of important tasks and opportunities such as improving the living conditions of slum dwellers, strengthening access to basic infrastructure services, ensuring resilience, and protecting ecosystems.<sup>99</sup>
2. Mobilize and utilize all urban resources and actors including CSOs, governments, educational institutions, and businesses to enhance problem-solving strategies and accelerate progress.<sup>100</sup>
3. Reduce urban poverty.<sup>101</sup>
4. Encourage and promote innovative infrastructure designs, which can offer new resources and opportunities for sustainable global development.<sup>102</sup>
5. Use land more effectively, which contributes to the enhancement of environmental sustainability and the effective utilization of natural resources.<sup>103</sup>
6. Ensure resilience to climate change and disaster risk reduction; cities produce the most greenhouse gas emissions among all regions and are affected by climate change the most, thereby making them pivotal to all discussion regarding climate change.<sup>104</sup>

### ***Obstacles and Challenges***

#### ***Poverty and Unemployment***

Fast and continuous urban population growth and limited resources creates pressure in the urban region, which in turn creates urban poverty.<sup>105</sup> The African region has been experiencing population growth that outpaces economic growth during the past three decades, a scenario termed “urbanization without development.”<sup>106</sup> Urban poverty is a root cause of urban slums, limited access to and low quality of education, and a high unemployment rate.<sup>107</sup> As a product of urban poverty, distressed youth are prevalent in cities, which not only make labor force participation low, but also create potential conflicts.<sup>108</sup> Extreme poverty and high unemployment rate plant seeds for criminal and violent acts.<sup>109</sup> Many armed conflicts and periods of social instability involve a significant number of youth either as

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<sup>93</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>94</sup> NGO IUVENTA, *Main Activities*.

<sup>95</sup> UN-Habitat, *Post-2015 Agenda*.

<sup>96</sup> UNSDSN, *UN Member States: National statements on Sustainable Cities & Human Settlements*.

<sup>97</sup> UN-Habitat, *UN System Task Team on the Post-2015 UN Development Agenda: Sustainable Urbanization Thematic Think Piece*, UN Habitat, 2012, pp. 5-6.

<sup>98</sup> UNSDSN, *Why Does the World Need an Urban SDG?*.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>105</sup> UNECA, *Contribution to the 2014 United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Integration Segment*, 2014, pp. 3-4.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>109</sup> City Alliance, *Youth: the face of Urbanisation*, 2012, p. 5.

leaders or participants. Providing a safe and decent living environment for young people is fundamental and essential for youth engagement. Hence, it is crucial to address the urban poverty and unemployment challenge to transform distressed, unemployed youth into productive components of sustainable urbanization.

#### *Health and Safety*

Youth, especially young women, are more vulnerable and likely to acquire HIV/AIDS virus because of factors including sexual abuse, child marriage, chain effects of other diseases, and human trafficking.<sup>110</sup> Both the effects of the diseases and stigmatization from those diseases lead to reduced civic engagement and marginalization.<sup>111</sup> The health needs of young people need to be urgently addressed by local and national authorities to protect their human rights and to enable them to contribute to society.<sup>112</sup>

#### *Climate Change and Natural Disasters*

Climate change and natural disasters affect all regions of the world, but pose significantly more of a challenge to the African region according to the UN Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD).<sup>113</sup> Extreme weather and climate change directly affect agriculture, water, health, and economic growth, which create barriers and threats for advancing sustainable urbanization and youth's stable living conditions.<sup>114</sup> Due to ineffective or absent disaster risk reduction programs, technology, all countries, especially developing countries, are extremely vulnerable to climate change and natural disasters, which prevent youth from participating in decision-making and civic activities.<sup>115</sup> Governments and local authorities should increase dialogue and research to help youth in areas that are significantly affected and vulnerable to climate change to protect their safety and increase their participation in sustainable urbanization initiatives.

#### **Conclusion**

Incorporating sustainable urbanization into the SDGs is vital to realize sustainable development for all. Sustainable cities can influence their surrounding areas and boost sustainable economic, social, political, and environmental growth. However, the challenges and obstacles the world is facing to achieve sustainable urbanization and engaging youth in the movement cannot be ignored.

The youth population is currently the largest it has ever been.<sup>116</sup> According to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), approximately 28% of the global population is between 10 and 24 years of age.<sup>117</sup> At the same time, the youth population is also experiencing high growth. A 155% increase in the youth population will occur in African urban areas between 2000 and 2030, and the increase in Asia will be 94%, while in Latin America it will be 55%.<sup>118</sup> The increase in youth population creates more challenges in youth development, but it also provides important resources and assets for sustainable urbanization.<sup>119</sup> Historically, due to limited access to education, poverty, unemployment, and a lack of opportunity in civic engagement, youth have not been able to make a strong presence in decision-making.<sup>120</sup> The contribution and potential of youth in international development is concrete and significant; Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's appointment of the Envoy on Youth, a position proposed by UN-Habitat's Youth 21 Initiative, is a prime example of how that potential can be cultivated.<sup>121</sup> UN-Habitat's UYF is also inspiring and empowering thousands of youth every year in 66 countries around the world to support their influence in communities.<sup>122</sup> Youth is not just one generation, but also the future of the world. Engaging the youth population in sustainable urbanization initiatives does not only give young people a chance to make an impact in the world, but more importantly, it also gives the world a chance to further advance.

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<sup>110</sup> City Alliance, *Youth: the face of Urbanisation*, 2012, pp. 4-5.

<sup>111</sup> UNDP, *Contribution to the 2014 United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Integration Segment*, 2014, p. 3.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>113</sup> UNCRD, *Contribution to the 2014 United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Integration Segment*, 2014, p. 4.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>116</sup> UNFPA, *How Has the World Changed in the Last 20 Years?*, 2014.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>118</sup> UN-Habitat, *Youth and the New Urban Agenda*, 2014, p. 1.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>121</sup> UN-Habitat, *Youth and the New Urban Agenda*, 2014, p. 2.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*

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*This document is a valuable resource to help delegates combine the research of sustainable development and urbanization together. The thematic think-piece begins with statistics and facts regarding the progress of urbanization, following the discussion on the role of urban areas in post-2015. In addition, analyses of cooperation and governance on international, regional, national and local level are also included at the end. Delegates will find this source helpful to obtain a better picture of the issue and current challenges.*

United Nations Centre for Regional Development. (2014). *Contribution to the 2014 United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Integration Segment* [Report]. Retrieved 28 May 2015 from: <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/integration/pdf/crd.pdf>

*Similar to UNDP's contribution to the ECOSOC integration segment of "Sustainable Urbanization," this is UNCRD's report on a regional level, instead of a global level. The challenges faced by African, Asian and Latin American regions are introduced on a detailed level in this document. In addition, recommended solutions, with UNCRD's expert opinions, are also included. This is a prime resource for delegates to have a clear picture of the position of different regions in sustainable urbanization. Delegates may also get ideas of possible solutions for the challenges from the recommendations.*

United Nations Development Programme. (2014). *Contribution to the 2014 United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) Integration Segment* [Report]. Retrieved 28 May 2015 from: <http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/integration/pdf/undp.pdf>

*This report is precise and provides a clear explanation of the major challenges the world is facing in terms of sustainable urbanization. The document introduces the causes of each challenge very well, which is helpful for delegates to form ideas on potential solutions. At the end of the paper, a few suggestions made by the UNDP on the approach to the challenges are included. Delegates may find this document very helpful to understand the common difficulties every country faces in the advancement of sustainable urbanization.*

United Nations Human Settlements Programme. (n.d.). *7<sup>th</sup> World Urban Forum Medellin Declaration* [Website]. Retrieved 27 May 2015 from: <http://unhabitat.org/7th-world-urban-forum-medellin-declaration/>

*As the most recent adopted international declaration on urbanization, this is a great resource for delegates to study the priorities of the international urbanization agenda. This declaration reaffirms the significance of cities in international development, introduces the New Urban Agenda, and states UN-Habitat's contribution and responsibilities in the next few years. It is a comprehensive and, yet, precise document for delegates to obtain more knowledge on the topic. Studying this declaration should help delegates gain more insights on the position of UN-Habitat, as well.*

United Nations Sustainable Development Network. (n.d.) *UN Member States: National statements on Sustainable Cities & Human Settlements* [Video]. Retrieved 27 May 2015 from: <http://urbansdg.org/un-member-states/>

*Besides reading all the statements, resolutions and reports, delegates may find this resource very helpful to understand how negotiations and discussions really work in the United Nations. This webpage provides videos of each country's speeches and statements at the seventh session of the UN GA Open Working Group on SDGs in 2014. It is the best and the most direct way to learn each country's position and priorities in sustainable urbanization. Delegates may also find this resource useful to gain formal public speaking tips.*

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## II. Addressing Long- and Short-Term Shelter Needs through Reconstruction Efforts

- What can UN-Habitat do to overcome the challenge of imbalance between increasing demands and limited resources in both long- and short-term shelter?
- How can UN-Habitat build its emergency preparedness capacity to better respond to emergencies, in both short- and long-term matters?
- What can UN-Habitat do to improve the capacity of local governments to provide high quality and safe reconstructions?

### *Introduction*

The core of reconstruction efforts goes beyond responding to emergencies day-by-day and instead makes a long-term impact by helping individuals live better and be more self-sufficient in the community. Immediate responses are crucial to people's safety, but it is equally important to ensure a higher-quality and safe living condition that is sustainable in the long run. Emergencies and crises are temporary; ensuring people the resources to live well after the incidents is what matters the most to society. UN-Habitat has always been an advocate of the "assessment, planning, monitoring" steps of reconstruction efforts to address both long- and short-term shelter needs.<sup>123</sup> Only by balancing short-term emergency efforts and long-term prevention, such as risk reduction, strategic planning, and capacity building, can the efficiency and effectiveness of UN-Habitat's response in crises be improved.<sup>124</sup> However, challenges, including limited financial and humanitarian assistance resources, complex crises, and local governments' poor execution of reconstruction projects, make UN-Habitat's work very difficult. The needs of both visible short-term emergency responses and strategic long-term recovery and development efforts are growing, and the collaboration between UN-Habitat and other actors has never been more crucial to provide a safer and better living condition for all.

### *International and Regional Framework*

Individuals' living conditions and environment have always been one of the top priorities and concerns of the UN, the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1946), the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights* (1966), the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women* (1979), and the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* (1989) all have articles and clauses that highlight every person's equal right to a standard of living and basic necessities.<sup>125</sup> Guided by the *Habitat Agenda*, UN-Habitat is also committed to ensure adequate housing to all through mechanisms, such as construction, rehabilitation, and maintenance, to address both short- and long-term needs of the community.<sup>126</sup> MDG 7, "ensuring environmental sustainability," Target 11, gave UN-Habitat a significant responsibility to support Member States in improving housing conditions.<sup>127</sup> In 2012, the

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<sup>123</sup> UN-Habitat, *Reconstruction*.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>125</sup> *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, 1946, Art. 25; *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*, 1966, Art. 111; *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women*, 1979, Art. 14; *Convention on the Rights of the Child*, 1989, Art. 27.

<sup>126</sup> UN-Habitat, *The Habitat Agenda Goals and Principles, Commitments and the Global Plan of Action*, 2003.

<sup>127</sup> UN-Habitat, *The UN Millennium Declaration and its Goals*.



United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio +20) further addressed the need to improve the standard of living for all and provide sustainable human settlements programs to all those in need.<sup>128</sup> Rio +20 also paved the way for the creation of the proposed SDGs.<sup>129</sup> As the MDGs reach their conclusion in 2015, the SDGs and the post-2015 development agenda will serve as a new roadmap for Member States and the UN system.<sup>130</sup> SDG 11, “make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable,” is a fundamental guideline of UN-Habitat’s work in sustainable human settlements.<sup>131</sup>

### ***Role of the International System***

#### *UN-Habitat*

As the expert on human settlements in the UN system and a devoted organization that commits to providing ample housing resources for all, UN-Habitat has contributed significant efforts in reconstruction initiatives.<sup>132</sup> The *Habitat Agenda* mandates UN-Habitat take the leading role in the coordination of human settlements programs in relation to natural disasters, armed conflicts, and climate mitigation.<sup>133</sup> UN-Habitat assists Member States, regional and local governments, and civil society in responding to emergencies and in building long-term capacity to withstand future events.<sup>134</sup> UN-Habitat’s goal is not only to protect individuals’ lives during emergencies but also to help and support survivors to become independent and self-reliant again after the emergencies.<sup>135</sup> One of UN-Habitat’s philosophies is “sustainable reconstruction,” which is engaging survivors in the organizing and rebuilding process after UN-Habitat has provided necessary immediate support.<sup>136</sup> This philosophy is beneficial to capacity-building and the long-term development of the community.<sup>137</sup>

The 20<sup>th</sup> session of the UN-Habitat GC introduced the concept of “sustainable relief and reconstruction” (SRR) and established the UN-Habitat Sustainable Relief and Recovery Framework in its pre-session document HSP/GC/20/5.<sup>138</sup> That document outlines the guiding principles of SRR, which addresses the importance of balancing short-term needs and long-term development in human settlements.<sup>139</sup> The document also highlights the vital role of coordinating resources, such as facilities, land, staffing, and funding, and planning at the earliest stage possible to fully utilize emergency resources.<sup>140</sup> Redirecting priorities and reallocating resources from meeting short-term needs effectively and investing in long-term development will benefit the community in the long run and achieve sustainable development.<sup>141</sup> Additionally, UN-Habitat’s 25<sup>th</sup> GC session also emphasized the importance of SRR.<sup>142</sup> GC draft resolution 25/4, entitled “implementation of the strategic plan for 2014-2019,” encourages all Member States to incorporate SRR in their long-term disaster prevention and risk reduction and sustainable human settlements planning.<sup>143</sup>

#### *Other UN Entities*

The UN system is working collaboratively to address the short- and long-term needs of reconstruction initiatives on both operative and policy-making levels. The UNDP, in the collaboration with Owner Driven Reconstruction Collaborative (ODRC), an umbrella non-governmental organization (NGO), launched reconstruction initiatives in

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<sup>128</sup> United Nations, *Future We Want – Outcome document*.

<sup>129</sup> United Nations, *Universal Sustainable Development Goals*.

<sup>130</sup> UN-Habitat, *Post 2015 Agenda*.

<sup>131</sup> United Nations, *Universal Sustainable Development Goals: Understanding the Transformational Challenge for Developed Countries*, 2015, p. 17.

<sup>132</sup> UN-Habitat, *Reconstruction*.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>138</sup> UN-Habitat, *Sustainable Relief and Reconstruction – Synopsis from World Urban Forum II & III: from Conceptual Framework to Operational Reality*, 2007, p. 2.

<sup>139</sup> UN-Habitat, *Post-conflict, natural and human-made disasters assessment and reconstruction (HSP/GC/20/5)*, 2005.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>141</sup> UN-Habitat, *Sustainable Relief and Reconstruction – Synopsis from World Urban Forum II & III: from Conceptual Framework to Operational Reality*, 2007, p. 6.

<sup>142</sup> UN-Habitat, *L-Document*.

<sup>143</sup> UN-Habitat, *Draft resolution 25/4: Implementation of the strategic plan for 2014-2019 (HSP/GC/25/L.6)*, 2015.

170 households in Bihar, India, after the Kosi floods in 2008.<sup>144</sup> With the support of the Indian government and the World Bank Group, UNDP was also able to engage 100,000 families in the planning and reconstruction process of their own houses.<sup>145</sup> Specializing in refugee matters, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has also made significant contributions in emergency relief and long-term humanitarian assistance.<sup>146</sup> From the ongoing, armed conflicts in Syria that began in 2011 to Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines in 2013, UNHCR has an emergency preparedness program that enables it to have standby support and resources to assist potential emergencies and long-term needs.<sup>147</sup> During its 2014 session, ECOSOC adopted resolution 2014/30 on the topic of “human settlements” and reaffirmed the vital partnership between UN-Habitat, the General Assembly, and ECOSOC in the matter of sustainable human settlements.<sup>148</sup> The 69<sup>th</sup> session of the General Assembly also discussed human settlement related items.<sup>149</sup> The body adopted resolution 69/L.62 on the topic of “implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and strengthening of United Nations Human Settlements Programme,” which reaffirmed the importance of long-term risk reduction and prevention in sustainable human settlements.<sup>150</sup> In response to the earthquake in Nepal of April 2015, the General Assembly also adopted resolution 69/L.66 addressing short-term emergency relief and the needs for supporting long-term reconstructions and rehabilitation.<sup>151</sup>

### *Civil Society Organizations*

CSOs are important implementing and operating partners for UN-Habitat because of their effective execution skills and expertise in training, information sharing, and technology.<sup>152</sup> For example, Oxfam International has been on the frontline of providing life-saving essentials such as food, finances, clean water, and shelter in response to emergencies around world like the earthquake in Nepal, armed conflicts in Gaza, and crises in Syria and South Sudan.<sup>153</sup> Although the UN system plays a vital role in post-disaster recovery, there are limitations such as distance, staff and resource shortages, or lack of expertise that make it extremely challenging for the UN alone to meet all the needs during these events. Thus, CSOs, with their knowledge of the region and expertise in certain fields, contribute significantly in addressing both short- and long-term shelter needs.

### *Case Studies*

#### *Nepal*

In response to a 7.8-magnitude earthquake that occurred in Nepal on 25 April 2015, which caused thousands of deaths, injuries and casualties, UN-Habitat released a “flash appeal for response” and distributed \$451 million in humanitarian aid for shelter, water, sanitation, and hygiene for the three months after the earthquake.<sup>154</sup> During the early stage of the emergency response, UN-Habitat initially prioritized housing assessments, sanitation and drainage systems, and clearing rubble, while also considering long-term reconstruction and rehabilitation needs.<sup>155</sup> On 12 May 2015, the Japanese government extended an \$800,000 Emergency Grant Aid to affected areas in Nepal through UN-Habitat.<sup>156</sup> Approximately 1,200 extremely vulnerable households including those with pregnant women, nursing mothers, and low-income households were the primary recipients of the Japanese shelter assistance, which included 600 shelter provision materials that could be utilized for later long-term reconstruction uses.<sup>157</sup> While UN-Habitat and its partners sought more funding for emergency shelter, they also engaged in discussions and planning with the Nepali government to form early recovery strategies, reconstruction standards, and community training

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<sup>144</sup> UNDP, *Protecting Development from Disasters: UNDP’s support to the Hyogo Framework for Action*, 2013, p. 91.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>146</sup> UNHCR, *What We Do*.

<sup>147</sup> UNHCR, *Global Appeal 2015 Update*, 2015, pp. 33-34.

<sup>148</sup> ECOSOC, *Human settlements (E/RES/2014/30)*, 2014.

<sup>149</sup> UNGA, *Resolutions: 69<sup>th</sup> session*.

<sup>150</sup> UNGA, *Implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) and strengthening of United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) (A/C.2/69/L.69)*, 2015.

<sup>151</sup> UNGA, *Strengthening emergency relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction in response to the devastating effects of the earthquake in Nepal (A/69/L. 66)*, 2015.

<sup>152</sup> UN-Habitat, *Our Partners*.

<sup>153</sup> Oxfam International, *Emergency response*.

<sup>154</sup> UN-Habitat, *UN-Habitat ready to support Shelter, WASH and Early Recovery in Nepal*, 2015.

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>156</sup> UN-Habitat, *Japan and UN-Habitat to provide shelter support in Nepal before and during monsoon*, 2015.

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*

programs to promote self-recovery.<sup>158</sup> The case of Nepal is a prime example of how UN-Habitat practices its SRR philosophy with the guidance principles outlined in the Sustainable Relief and Recovery Framework. A timely response with ample and prepared resources is crucial when emergencies occur, especially in the case of natural disasters, which may have follow-up activities and unforeseen effects. In addition, incorporating planning and preparation for the long-term human settlement at the early stage will provide a big picture of the situation and transform short-term intervention to long-term impact.

### *Syria*

The armed conflict in Syria created the most challenging and complicated humanitarian tasks in the past decade.<sup>159</sup> The estimated number of damaged and destroyed houses have exceeded 250,000, which has caused over 5 million internally displaced people while approximately \$7 billion will need to be distributed in the recovery process.<sup>160</sup> UN-Habitat is working with partners, especially those in Lebanon, Jordan, and Iraq, to address immediate needs created by the ongoing conflict and to strategically plan for long-term development including shelter strategy development, shelter and housing assessments, and neighborhood planning and coordination.<sup>161</sup> Human-caused armed conflicts are complex in the sense that they involve multiple parties; in this case several countries are involved, which means conflicts of interests are very likely to occur. Ensuring affected individuals' essential living resources and keeping flexibility to adjust to new situations at the same time are both important and difficult for UN-Habitat and CSOs to achieve.

### ***Current Challenges***

As increasing armed conflicts take place across the globe, the needs for shelter and emergency preparedness is rapidly increasing and is greater than the resources available.<sup>162</sup> Since the resources for short-term emergency response are already limited, it leaves less funding for UN-Habitat, CSOs, and donors to distribute resources to long-term rehabilitation.<sup>163</sup> As important as solving visible short-term emergencies are, it is equally vital to have an ample budget and thorough planning for long-term development and capacity-building. Humanitarian assistance should go beyond short-term intervention to include long-term development that will make a positive and significant impact on the community.<sup>164</sup> Hence, risk reduction programs and strategic assessments should be implemented in the early stages, alongside the immediate emergency response.<sup>165</sup> However, it can be difficult to balance and reallocate limited resources between short- and long-term needs. Additionally, the high demands and needs for immediate availability of shelters create challenges to proper planning, creating, consultation, and review of the quality of the shelters, which do not only threaten individuals' safety but also increase risks for potential damages.<sup>166</sup> Long-term constructions mainly relies on the efforts of local governments, whose capability to coordinate, execute, and complete the job may be limited, which in turn makes providing safe and ample long-term shelters more challenging.<sup>167</sup>

### ***Conclusion***

UN-Habitat is devoted to providing adequate and safe shelter for all. The increasing impact of both natural disasters and armed conflicts across the globe not only create extremely challenging tasks for UN-Habitat, but also impact every individual's life every day. Hence, it is a battle for everyone, every country, and every continent. Immediate interventions that address short-term needs are crucial to save lives and reduce the harms caused by the incidents; strategic impacts that fulfill long-term needs are vital to reduce the risks of the disasters occurring and harming people again. Short-term needs are urgent and visible, which requires timely response and adequate emergency preparedness, and long-term needs are abstract but strategic, which requires continuous planning and preparation to reduce potential harms. Although limited resources do not allow UN-Habitat to respond to all the needs at the same time, prioritizing short- and long-term shelter needs is difficult, and local governments' limited capacity makes the

<sup>158</sup> UN-Habitat, *Japan and UN-Habitat to provide shelter support in Nepal before and during monsoon*, 2015.

<sup>159</sup> UN-Habitat, *Reconstruction*.

<sup>160</sup> UN-Habitat, *Reconstruction*; UN-Habitat, *Syria*.

<sup>161</sup> UN-Habitat, *Syria*.

<sup>162</sup> UN-Habitat, et al, *Housing, Land & Property Issues in Lebanon: Implications of the Syrian Refugee Crisis*, 2014, p. 6.

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>164</sup> UNDP, *Protecting Development from Disasters: UNDP's support to the Hyogo Framework for Action*, 2013, p.14.

<sup>165</sup> UN-Habitat, et al, *Housing, Land & Property Issues in Lebanon: Implications of the Syrian Refugee Crisis*, 2014, p. 6.

<sup>166</sup> UN-Habitat, et al, *Housing, Land & Property Issues in Lebanon: Implications of the Syrian Refugee Crisis*, 2014, p. 8.

<sup>167</sup> *Ibid.*

execution and completion of reconstruction projects challenging. UN-Habitat has made significant progress with its partners in this battle. Future positive impacts will only increase with the continued work and collaboration among Member States, the UN system, and all international actors.

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*This resolution provides a prime example of how the UN system addresses and responds to emergencies. This resolution makes references to several previous important documents and international agreements, which delegates could look into for future research. The operative clauses highlight essential and important actions that the UN system should take. Delegates can have a better idea of UN-Habitat's role in emergency relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction from studying this resolution. Additionally, this document could serve as an example of draft resolution writing during the conference.*

United Nations Development Programme. (2013). *Protecting Development from Disasters: UNDP's support to the Hyogo Framework for Action*. Retrieved 22 May 2015 from:

<http://www.undp.org/content/dam/undp/library/crisis%20prevention/20130712UNDPsupporttoHyogoframework.pdf>

*As a close partner of UN-Habitat, UNDP has expertise in disaster recovery and long-term development initiatives. This document introduces UNDP's approaches and strategies in emergency response, risk reduction and disaster recovery. Case studies of Mozambique, Indonesia, Armenia, India and Ecuador in different types of emergencies are also included. Seeing how other UN entities address the needs of long- and short-term shelter needs and taking reconstruction initiatives may provide delegates a different mindset when researching the topic.*

United Nations Human Settlements Programme. (n.d.). *Reconstruction* [Website]. Retrieved 19 May 2015 from:

<http://unhabitat.org/urban-themes/reconstruction/>

*This is the most relevant and important webpage on this topic. It does not only introduce UN-Habitat's fundamental philosophies in reconstruction efforts, but also includes brief views of its works in different regions of the world in different fields of emergencies. In addition, reconstruction related news and documents are also updated and listed in the bottom of the page. Delegates should find this webpage a great starting point of their research. Keeping up to date with this page may also help delegates familiarize with the latest news and UN-Habitat reconstruction works.*

United Nations Human Settlements Programme. (2007). *Sustainable Relief and Reconstruction – Synopsis from World Urban Forum II & III: from Conceptual Framework to Operational Reality*. 2007. Retrieved 19 May 2015 from: [http://sheltercentre.org/sites/default/files/un-habitat\\_2007\\_sustainable\\_relief\\_and\\_reconstruction.pdf](http://sheltercentre.org/sites/default/files/un-habitat_2007_sustainable_relief_and_reconstruction.pdf)

*This document does a great job in explaining the needs, challenges, and guidelines to address long-term needs and sustainable relief and reconstruction (SRR). Beginning with introducing the concept of SRR and the process of its establishment, following are the steps, aims and process of applying the SRR philosophy in operations. Challenges that may occur during each step and process are also included. SRR is one of the most important practice guidelines of UN-Habitat, and delegates are highly encouraged to read through this document to obtain more knowledge on the concept and challenges of SRR. Delegates may also find the "challenges" section helpful in finding research directions.*

United Nations Human Settlements Programme, et al. (2014). *Housing, Land & Property Issues in Lebanon: Implications of the Syrian Refugee Crisis*. Retrieved 22 May 2015 from: <http://unhabitat.org/housing-land-and-property-issues-in-lebanon-implications-of-the-syrian-refugee-crisis-august-2014/>

*This is a document drafted in the collaboration of UN-Habitat, the European Union, and UNHCR. Multiple organizations' work, strategies and opinions may be seen in this document. As one of the most complex and challenging human settlement projects UN-Habitat has faced in more than a decade, the Syrian conflict crisis is very worth studying. This document provides an overview of the situation in Syria and Lebanon, especially the housing and shelter situation. Case studies on*

*the housing situation in an urban and rural area are also included, which provide a clear comparison in different approaches of addressing the needs for shelters. Delegates may find this document helpful in gaining more knowledge in applying the issue in real-life context.*

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### III. Mitigating Climate Change by Utilizing Alternative Energy Sources

- How can UN-Habitat work with Member States to mitigate climate change through the use of alternative energy sources such as solar, wind, nuclear, and geothermal energy?
- In what ways can the post-2015 development agenda's emphasis on climate change assist the UN system and, particularly, UN-Habitat in targeting ways to utilize alternative energy sources?
- What types of obstacles must be overcome at the local and regional levels in order to explore new and alternative sources of energy?

## **Introduction**

To make a significant impact in reducing the effects of climate change, major advancements need to be made in the accessibility and utilization of renewable energy. Climate change is any drastic environmental change, measured over time.<sup>168</sup> This causes an increase in the temperature of the earth, which affects precipitation patterns and other weather phenomena.<sup>169</sup> These changes not only negatively affect human health but also cause a change in crop yields.<sup>170</sup> Renewable energy limits carbon emissions and offers reliable access to energy in impoverished areas.<sup>171</sup> Five percent of the global energy supply is comprised of renewable energy.<sup>172</sup> UN-Habitat has partnered with other UN agencies to make significant advancements, with the hope of creating cleaner environments around the world. UN-Habitat has worked with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to form the Sustainable Cities Programme (SCP).<sup>173</sup> Additionally, UN-Habitat has launched the Cities and Climate Change Initiative (CCCI), which has been successful in helping cities reduce the use of harmful energy sources.<sup>174</sup>

## **International and Regional Framework**

One of the most important documents under which UN-Habitat operates came out of the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio +20) in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.<sup>175</sup> Rio +20 was an updated conference to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992.<sup>176</sup> The original conference reiterated the importance of preemptive measures taken to prevent climate change.<sup>177</sup> One result of Rio +20 was General Assembly resolution 66/288.<sup>178</sup> This resolution reiterates the UN's commitment to advancements in the field of sustainable development, while bearing in mind the well-being of humankind and the environment in which we live.<sup>179</sup> The document also acknowledges that a key component of sustainable development is constant economic growth.<sup>180</sup> The document further sets out to make significant progress in the eradication of poverty.<sup>181</sup> The aforementioned goals are of high priority to UN-Habitat as well.<sup>182</sup> It is a document that accurately describes the priorities that UN-Habitat and Rio +20 share.

UN-Habitat further aligns with the proposed SDGs.<sup>183</sup> The SDGs were proposed as part of the UN's broader efforts to draft a post-2015 development agenda and were called for in General Assembly resolution 66/288.<sup>184</sup> The SDGs currently proposed by the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals include 17 goals aimed at environmental and economic progress.<sup>185</sup> These draft SDGs pay specific attention to the damaging effects of climate change and the need for upgraded and stable settlements for all.<sup>186</sup> Particularly, SDG 11 outlines a plan for greater access to more sustainable and affordable housing by 2030.<sup>187</sup> SDG 11 also reiterates the need to acknowledge the link between environmental changes and urban planning.<sup>188</sup>

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<sup>168</sup> United States of America, Environmental Protection Agency, *Climate change: basic information*.

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>170</sup> United States of America, Environmental Protection Agency, *Climate changes impacts and adapting to change*.

<sup>171</sup> UN DESA, *Renewable Energy*.

<sup>172</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>173</sup> UN-Habitat, *Sustainable Cities Programme*.

<sup>174</sup> UN-Habitat, *Cities and Climate Change Initiative (CCCI)*.

<sup>175</sup> UNCED, *Rio declaration on environment and development (A/CONF.151/26)*, 1992.

<sup>176</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>177</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>178</sup> UNGA, *The future we want (A/RES/66/288)*, 2012.

<sup>179</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>180</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>182</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>183</sup> UNGA, *Report of the open working group of the general assembly on sustainable development goals (A/68/970)*, 2014.

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>185</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>186</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>187</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>188</sup> *Ibid.*

### *Role of the International System*

UN-Habitat works not only within its own internal divisions, but also with different governments and organizations in order to achieve the goals set out in the field of climate change. UN-Habitat led the General Assembly-hosted UN Climate Summit on 23 September 2014 at UN Headquarters.<sup>189</sup> The Summit was a collaborative effort between the Secretary-General and Member States, which aimed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and reach a global agreement on legal measures in 2015.<sup>190</sup>

#### *Role of UN-Habitat*

In the Strategic Plan for 2014-2019, UN-Habitat has placed an emphasis on helping developing countries adapt to climate change.<sup>191</sup> UN-Habitat prioritizes “climate proofing” during urban planning.<sup>192</sup> Location and current climate of the area are taken into consideration when deciding what measures should be implemented.<sup>193</sup> UN-Habitat prioritizes green and low-energy building concepts when planning new cities.<sup>194</sup> Particularly, when developing infrastructure the plan is designed with the future condition of the area in mind.<sup>195</sup> Methods of drainage systems, usual rise of sea level, water treatment, and sources of renewable energy are all considered when planning a city.<sup>196</sup>

At the same time, as preventative measures are set as a priority when planning new cities, UN-Habitat also aims to reform climate change measures in cities that are already established.<sup>197</sup> UN-Habitat urges cities to alter their energy sources to renewable resources instead of fossil fuels.<sup>198</sup> Encouragement and education regarding greenhouse gas emissions reduction is another priority for UN-Habitat.<sup>199</sup> The committee has developed the CCCI, which supports local governments in their effort to reduce their use of harmful energy sources.<sup>200</sup> Initiated in Mombasa, Kenya, and Kampala, Uganda, this initiative stretches to 40 cities around the world.<sup>201</sup> Through the initiative, cities participate in an assessment of their current climate change actions and then an action plan is designed by the CCCI and implemented by the city so that progress can be made.<sup>202</sup>

#### *UN-Habitat Collaboration*

UN-Habitat and UNEP collaborated in the 1990s to form the SCP.<sup>203</sup> The aim of this program is to promote and support institutional strengthening and capacity-building in the efforts of cities to be more sustainable.<sup>204</sup> The program also reaffirms the ability of cities to be positive contributors to social and economic development.<sup>205</sup> Both UN-Habitat and the SCP were key players in Rio +20.<sup>206</sup> UN-Habitat also closely aligns with the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which was an outcome of the 1992 UNCED Earth Summit.<sup>207</sup> The UNFCCC outlines the importance of stabilizing greenhouse gas emissions and the environment’s ability to adapt to climate change.<sup>208</sup> On 10 June 2015, the UNFCCC hosted a forum that took place in 75 cities around the globe.<sup>209</sup> The forum aimed to educate participants on the detrimental effects of climate change, while also

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<sup>189</sup> United Nations, *Climate summit 2014: catalyzing action*.

<sup>190</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>191</sup> UN-Habitat, *Strategic plan for 2014-2019 and the work programme and budget of the United Nations Human Settlements Programme for the biennium 2016-2017 (HSP/GC/25/L.2)*, 2015.

<sup>192</sup> UN-Habitat, *Climate change*.

<sup>193</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>194</sup> UN-Habitat, *Energy*.

<sup>195</sup> UN-Habitat, *Climate change*.

<sup>196</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>197</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>198</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>199</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>200</sup> UN-Habitat, *Cities and Climate Change Initiative (CCCI)*.

<sup>201</sup> UN-Habitat, *Youth in Kampala, Uganda look at climate change through a gender ‘lens’*, 2011.

<sup>202</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>203</sup> UN-Habitat, *Sustainable Cities Programme*.

<sup>204</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>205</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>206</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>207</sup> *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (A/AC-237/18)*, 1992.

<sup>208</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>209</sup> UNFCCC, *Surprising citizen’s views on climate change*, 2015.



gathering information about public knowledge on the issue.<sup>210</sup> Furthermore, UN-Habitat has developed the Habitat Agenda Partners, which is a network of linked NGOs that strive for sustainable development in the field of human settlements.<sup>211</sup> Additionally, UN-Habitat has developed the Sustainable Urban Development Network, a global partnership aimed at education and promotion of sustainability within urban development.<sup>212</sup> Finally, CSOs also have made significant contributions on climate change policy. For instance, Greenpeace International, a CSO that primarily focuses on environmental initiatives, calls for international collaboration to end dependence on fossil fuels.<sup>213</sup> Greenpeace has eight suggestions for policy changes, such as phasing out fossil fuels and nuclear energy and establishing renewable energy usage targets that are legally binding.<sup>214</sup>

### *Climate Change*

UN-Habitat estimates that cities cover only 2% of the Earth's surface but produce more than 60% of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions.<sup>215</sup> The detrimental effects of increased greenhouse gas emissions can be viewed through changes in sea level and precipitation, increases in the amount and strength of natural disasters, and extreme instability of the Earth's temperatures.<sup>216</sup> Impoverished people around the world are the most affected by climate change due to the location of their settlements.<sup>217</sup> For example, settlements that are built close to the water's edge are negatively impacted by the rise in sea level.<sup>218</sup>

A lack of advancement in reducing the effects of climate change can be explained by a low amount of awareness or access to information.<sup>219</sup> The UNFCCC emphasizes this point and implements a plan of action.<sup>220</sup> The Convention calls for the assistance from international bodies in the implementation of education and awareness programs.<sup>221</sup> Additionally, the Convention calls for the strengthening of existing institutions' information sharing, especially in developing countries.<sup>222</sup> The UNFCCC calls for countries to submit their Intended Nationally Determined Contribution, a program that encourages countries to create a plan of action to make the change toward clean energy.<sup>223</sup> It was reported that 81 countries, the first being Switzerland, have enrolled.<sup>224</sup> A second series of countries of a similar number is expected to enroll by September.<sup>225</sup>

Additionally, 2012 was officially known as the International Year of Sustainability for All, through General Assembly resolution 65/151.<sup>226</sup> The goal of the resolution was for Member States to use the year of 2012 to promote education and awareness of climate change.<sup>227</sup> It was the hope that greater access to education and the knowledge of alternative energy sources would help achieve the MDGs.<sup>228</sup> The currently proposed SDGs were developed as part of the post-2015 development agenda that will take effect at the conclusion of the MDGs in 2015 and hope to change the world by 2030.<sup>229</sup>

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<sup>210</sup> UNFCCC, *Surprising citizen's views on climate change*, 2015.

<sup>211</sup> UN-Habitat, *Our partners*.

<sup>212</sup> UN-Habitat, *Sustainable Urban Development Network*.

<sup>213</sup> Greenpeace, *The energy [r]evolution 2012*.

<sup>214</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>215</sup> UN-Habitat, *Climate Change*.

<sup>216</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>217</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>218</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>219</sup> United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (A/AC-23718), 1992.

<sup>220</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>221</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>222</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>223</sup> UNFCCC, *UNFCCC Opens Portal for Countries to Submit Climate Plans*, 2015.

<sup>224</sup> UNFCCC, *Progress of INDC Preparation Worldwide*, 2015

<sup>225</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>226</sup> UNGA, *International Year of Sustainable Energy for All (A/RES/65/151)*, 2012.

<sup>227</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>228</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>229</sup> The Guardian, *Sustainable development goals, all you need to know*.

## **Renewable Energy**

Although it is evident that utilizing renewable energy in place of fossil fuels is one of the key components to reducing the effects of climate change, there are barriers in the way of developing the field.<sup>230</sup> Utilizing energy efficiently is a market of untapped potential, with opportunities to reduce energy used at little to no cost.<sup>231</sup> Even if Member States have chosen to utilize renewable energy, the resources of their governments alone are not enough to make significant progress.<sup>232</sup> UN agencies, such as UN-Habitat and UN-Energy, provide financial assistance to the governments that choose to implement it.<sup>233</sup> It is important to create greater access for investment opportunities so renewable energy can become commonplace around the world.<sup>234</sup> The General Assembly has acknowledged this need through resolution 64/206.<sup>235</sup> This document calls for new, market-oriented strategies to enhance access and the ability to harness renewable energy.<sup>236</sup> In addition, the resolution also encourages governments to reaffirm their commitment to investment and research in the field of renewable energy.<sup>237</sup>

After overcoming all of the barriers and challenges that hinder the use of renewable energy, the benefits and effects on the world will be able to be seen. Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon's report at the 69<sup>th</sup> session of the General Assembly, entitled "Promotion of new and renewable sources of energy" on 18 August 2014, reaffirms the need to provide greater access to renewable energy by explaining the long-term benefits.<sup>238</sup> The document states that successful technological advancements at lower costs in developing countries will have a significant impact in the implementation of renewable energy around the world.<sup>239</sup> The switch will reduce costs of energy use, which will contribute to the global reduction of poverty.<sup>240</sup>

### **Case Study: Nairobi**

UN-Habitat hosted a training seminar in July 2013 for 30 East African youth on the importance of utilizing renewable energy.<sup>241</sup> Hailing from Kenya, Uganda, and Rwanda, participants worked to reinforce the idea that young people are the driving force behind utilizing alternative energy sources.<sup>242</sup> The training not only provided a source of information but also trained people who intend to go out and make the world a better place.<sup>243</sup> The youth are now trained in how to utilize, implement, and install alternative energy sources, particularly solar lanterns and solar bulbs.<sup>244</sup> It is the intention of the youth to bring this knowledge back to their communities and help transform the economy into a more energy conscious environment.<sup>245</sup> With the success of this training program, UN-Habitat hopes to replicate this program around the world to further promote the use of renewable energy.<sup>246</sup>

### **Conclusion**

In order to slow climate change, Member States need to make the shift toward utilizing renewable energy. Utilizing renewable energy will cut down on costs and provide reliable access to energy in communities. Although there are significant advancements being made toward education and access to sources of renewable energy, there is still significant room for improvement. UN-Habitat strives to provide sustainable living conditions for people around the world, and utilizing renewable energy is a key component of that mission. Delegates will find that collaboration between UN-Habitat and other agencies will help maximize the success rate of sustainable human settlements.

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<sup>230</sup> UN-Energy, *Renewable energy*.

<sup>231</sup> UN-Energy, *Energy efficiency*.

<sup>232</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>233</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>234</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>235</sup> UNGA, *Promotion of new and renewable sources of energy (A/RES/64/206)*, 2010.

<sup>236</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>237</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>238</sup> UNGA, *Promotion of new and renewable sources of energy: Report of the Secretary-General (A/69/323)*, 2014.

<sup>239</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>240</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>241</sup> Office of the Secretary-General's Envoy on Youth, *UN-Habitat trains East African youth on energy efficiency*, 2013.

<sup>242</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>243</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>244</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>245</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>246</sup> *Ibid.*

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*This resolution details the importance of using new and renewable resources as an alternative energy source. It lays out steps for the introduction of new and renewable resources, as well as ways to include developing and least developed countries. It also references other documents and past conventions on the issue. Delegates will find policy ideas that will be useful when developing their own work.*

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-sixth session. (2012). *The future we want (A/RES/66/288)* [Resolution]. Retrieved 24 May 2015 from: [http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/66/288&Lang=E](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/66/288&Lang=E)

*This is the document that explicitly called for the creation of the SDGs. The background research that was important to the development of the SDGs can be found within. Delegates can utilize this document to expand their background research because it is a necessary tool to understanding the reasoning behind the implementation of other important documents.*

United Nations, General Assembly, Sixty-eighth session. (2014). *Report of the open working group of the general assembly on sustainable development goals (A/68/970)*. Retrieved 24 May 2015 from:

[http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/68/970&Lang=E](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/68/970&Lang=E)

*This document lays out the SDGs, and is therefore an important document for delegates. It outlines the specific goals of the United Nations in the field of sustainability. It will show delegates exactly where UN-Habitat stands in relation to the rest of the UN. Additionally, the document will help the delegates begin their research into climate change.*

United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, First session. (1992). *Rio declaration on environment and development (A/CONF.151/26)* [Convention]. Retrieved 24 May 2015 from:

<http://www.un.org/documents/ga/conf151/aconf15126-1annex1.htm/>

*This convention is the foothold of all of the conventions on climate change in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The document outlines twenty-seven principles, all centered on human influence on sustainable development. It is a snapshot of the world 20 years ago. It shows how little has changed and hopefully reiterates the importance of change. Delegates will be able to gather a clear understanding of the world we live in. This document will also provide a starting point for research into this topic.*

United Nations Human Settlements Programme. (n.d). *Cities and Climate Change Initiative (CCCI)* [Website].

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*This website provides links to newsletters published on behalf of the CCCI. The newsletters describe accomplishments and updates of the initiative. This website can act as a supplement to delegate research. Offering important information regarding the work done by UN-Habitat within the parameters of the topic, delegates will be able to gauge the priorities of UN-Habitat in terms of climate change prevention.*

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